

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Washington, D.C.

September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**EPA – UNEP MOU Signing with Administrator McCarthy and  
UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim**

DATE: September 16, 2016  
LOCATION: Alvin L. Alm Conference Room  
MEETING TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.  
FROM: Hodayah Finman, Senior Adviser, OITA/OGAP

**I. PURPOSE**

This is the first meeting between **YOU** and the new United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director (ED), Erik Solheim, who replaced former Executive Director Achim Steiner in June, 2016. **YOU** and ED Solheim will discuss the top priorities for your respective agencies and areas of past and future collaboration. At the end of the meeting, **YOU** and ED Solheim will sign a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between EPA and UNEP, replacing the first MOU between the two agencies signed in 2011.

**II. TALKING POINTS**

- A strong working relationship between EPA and UNEP enhances global efforts to promote human health and the environment. We are excited to reaffirm this collaboration with the signing of a renewed MOU.
- This is a crucial time to address climate change. I am proud we are now a party to the Paris Agreement. One pivotal next step is adopting the HFC phasedown amendment in October.
- Other vital activities include the joint meeting of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), Global Methane Initiative and EPA, which took place in Washington last spring.
- EPA has been a strong supporter of the Minamata convention and we look forward to the entering into force in 2017 and ensuring its effective implementation.
- Following the WHO report that air pollution contributes to one in eight deaths globally EPA is pleased that UNEP has integrated air quality into its programs and continues to promote air pollution as a priority to environment ministries everywhere.
- UNEP and EPA achieved dramatic success in addressing lead exposure, first with the Partnership on Clean Fuels and Vehicles and now under the Global Alliance on Lead Paint.
- EPA is the US government focal point for the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP) and participates in several working groups. We were pleased to help strengthen UNEP's mandate at UNEA-2, particularly through a resolution on the prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste.

- EPA strongly supported the UNEA resolutions on marine plastic litter and Microplastics. We partner with the UNEP Caribbean Environment Program on marine litter.
- EPA also works with UNEP on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) and introduced methods to mobilize resources for wastewater treatment infrastructure for the Caribbean region.
- EPA and UNEP collaborate on research projects which enhance the sharing of data, improving public access to scientific information and promoting data-driven establishment and enforcement of environmental standards.
- A foundation of our shared work is strengthening environmental rule of law. As the US National Focal Point for the Montevideo Programme, EPA prioritizes public participation, access to information and access to justice.

### III. PARTICIPANTS

#### EPA Attendees

- **YOU**
- Matt Fritz, Chief of Staff
- Jane Nishida, OITA Acting Assistant Administrator
- Acting AA Janet McCabe, OAR
- Assistant Administrator Jim Jones, OCSPP
- Deputy Assistant Administrator for Management Lek Kadeli, ORD
- Principle Deputy Assistant Administrator Mike Shapiro, OW
- Deputy General Counsel, Ethan Shenkman
- Walker Smith, OITA Office of Global Affairs and Policy Director
- Carol Ann Siciliano, OGC
- Martin Dieu, OITA Chief of Staff
- Marianne Bailey, OITA Office of Global Affairs and Policy Deputy Director
- Kathleen Salyer, Deputy Director Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery, OLEM
- Hodayah Finman, OITA, OGAP International Organizations Program Senior Advisor

- Ted MacDonald, OITA
- Alexis Rourk, OITA
- Brianna Besch, OITA
- Lisa Goldman, OGC
- Kelley Smith, ORD
- Karissa Kovner, OCSPP
- John Shoaff, OAR

#### UNEP Attendees

- Erik Solheim, Executive Director
- Patricia (Pattie) Beneke, Regional Director and Representative for North America
- Fatou Ndoeye, Deputy Regional Director
- Adam Hodge, Press Secretary to the Executive Director
- Lisa Svensson, Director, Global Marine Programme
- Laura Fuller, Information Officer, Regional Office for North America
- Hilary French, Programme Officer, Regional Office for North America

### IV. BACKGROUND

EPA has a longstanding and successful relationship with UNEP that includes numerous substantive partnerships. The 2011 MOU was signed between then-Administrator Lisa Jackson and then-UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner at the UNEP Governing Council Meeting/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, in Nairobi, Kenya. The 2016 MOU updates areas of cooperation the following: strengthening environmental laws, national institutional capacity, and national governance; creating healthy communities; transitioning to a green economy; responding to climate change and global challenges; and providing scientific leadership. In addition to the MOU EPA has a modest cooperative agreement with UNEP that is structured so that all EPA offices can work with UNEP on specific projects.

**YOU** have not previously met Executive Director Solheim, who was appointed to the position of UNEP Executive Director in May, 2016 and assumed the role in June. OITA Acting Assistant Administrator Jane Nishida and US State Department representatives participated in a bilateral meeting with Mr. Solheim during UNEA-2 in Nairobi in May, 2016.

UNEP was established in 1972 and addresses environmental issues at the global and regional level for the United Nations. UNEP has six regional offices and is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. UNEP is funded primarily through member state contributions; the U.S. gives \$10 million annually. Additional programmatic activity is funded through supplemental trust funds or cooperative agreements.

At Rio+20 in 2012, UNEP was strengthened and became a universal membership body. This change replaced UNEP's previous governing board with the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) which meets every two years in Nairobi. At UNEA, member states set UNEP's agenda, approve its work plan and budget, and raise the profile of emerging issues. At UNEA-1 the U.S. focused on raising the profile of air quality, resulting in a UNEA resolution on enhancing the role of UNEP in promoting air quality. At UNEA-2, the U.S. introduced a resolution on the prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste, marking the first time this issue has been raised in a multilateral environment ministers meeting.

EPA believes UNEP's strengths and core competencies are in its convening power and "brand" recognition, particularly with developing country environment ministries. It also provides Secretariat services to binding agreements and voluntary partnerships.

## V. ATTACHMENTS

1. UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim Bio
2. EPA UNEP Highlights Handout
3. Additional Background on EPA-UNEP Cooperation
4. Run of Show
5. EPA UNEP 2016 MOU

## Attachment 1: Executive Director Erik Solheim Bio

<http://www.unep.org/About/executivedirector/solheim/Biography.aspx>



Following an extensive career focusing on environment and development in government and international organizations, Erik Solheim was elected to become Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on May 13, 2016.

Prior to joining UNEP, Solheim was the chair of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). As head of the DAC, which is the main body of the world's development donors, Solheim emphasized the role of private sector and tax in development finance, spearheading the Sustainable Development Investment Partnership and the Addis Tax Initiative. Solheim also focused on the need to channel more aid to least-developed countries, and bring new members and partners to the DAC.

From 2007 to 2012, Solheim held the combined portfolio of Norway's Minister of the Environment and International Development, and from 2005 to 2007 served as Minister of International Development. This unique portfolio mixture allowed him to bring a coherent approach to development and the environment.

During his time as Minister, Norwegian aid reached 1%, the highest in the world. Solheim also put into place the Nature Diversity Act, which many consider to be Norway's most important piece of environmental legislation in the last 100 years. The Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative, in which Norway cooperates closely with Brazil, Indonesia, Guyana and other countries to conserve rainforests, was also established under Solheim. This initiative provided critical input to the establishment of UN REDD, the global coalition to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries.

Solheim is also an experienced peace negotiator, having acted as the main facilitator of the peace process in Sri Lanka from 1998 to 2005. The peace process led to a ceasefire and the Oslo Declaration in 2002, where parties welcomed a federal state in Sri Lanka. He continued to lead peace efforts in Sri Lanka as Minister, and has contributed to peace processes in Sudan, Nepal, Myanmar and Burundi.

In addition to his career as a Minister and at the OECD, Solheim has served as UNEP's Special Envoy for Environment, Conflict and Disaster since 2013 and a Patron of Nature for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 2012. He has also received a number of awards for his work on climate and the environment, including UNEP's Champion of the Earth award, TIME Magazine's Hero of the Environment, and an honorary doctorate from TERI University in Delhi, India. He has also written three books: *Den store samtalen*, *Naermere*, and *Politikk er a ville*.

Solheim holds a degree in history and social studies from the University of Oslo. He is married with four children.

## **Attachment 2: Additional Background on EPA–UNEP Cooperation**

EPA works with UNEP on a broad range of issues, including:

### **Chemicals and Waste:**

- One of EPA's top priority efforts is through the UNEP Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Based Paint which is working to put in place effective regulations to eliminate lead in paint globally. Lead is a neurotoxin that robs children of their potential to learn and costs economies trillions of dollars in lost GDP. We are working with UNEP in Geneva and with the UNEP Regional Office for Africa to plan a workshop to promote lead paint laws in the East African Community.
- EPA plays a leadership role in the UNEP's Global Mercury Partnership and their goal to protect human health and the environment from exposure to anthropogenic sources of mercury. EPA serves as the co-chair for Partnership Advisory Group and as lead of the Products and Chlor-Alkali Partnership Areas. In addition, the United States has taken a number of steps domestically to reduce the use of mercury in a wide range of products, including measuring devices, batteries, and other products, as well as worked internationally to devise solutions to reduce exposure to mercury from small-scale artisanal gold mining. Under the MOU, EPA's OCSPP has committed funding to update an important source of global mercury data, UNEP's 2006 Summary of Supply, Trade, and Demand Information on Mercury, to further support UNEP and our global efforts to reduce mercury.

### **Climate and Air Quality**

- The US was a founding partner of the Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants, for which UNEP serves as the Secretariat. EPA has provided key technical support or is a lead partner on a number of the CCAC initiatives. EPA has been especially involved in the cookstove initiative, the Health initiative, the HFC initiative, the Supporting National Action Planning for Action on Short Lived Climate Pollutants (SNAP) initiative, the Oil & Gas initiative (which has launched the Oil & Gas Methane Partnership), the Assessments initiative, and the Waste initiative.
- EPA is also investing additional resources to develop and support programs, such as the Global Methane Initiative and the Megacity Partnerships with Ghana and Chile, which both complement the work of the CCAC and promote scale-up of programs that have a measurable impact on climate and public health. Though the Megacity Partnerships, EPA is collaborating with the World Bank, UNEP, WHO, the Stockholm Environment Institute and others to leverage resources and expertise to develop an integrated approach in addressing air quality impacts on climate and public health. These collaborations are exploring how emerging sensor technologies, as well as newer satellite data, can help governments fill key data gaps. UNEP is playing an important role in the development and deployment of low cost sensor technology for application in developing countries.

- EPA was a founding partner in the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles which succeeded in the phasing out of leaded gasoline in most of the world. Now the PCFV is focused on developing harmonized fuels and vehicles standards, with a focus on a systems approach to maximize the air quality benefits of low sulfur fuels. In partnership with UNEP, EPA provides technical and policy advice and participates in stakeholder outreach, particularly in East Africa.
- EPA works closely with the Global Adaptation Network (GAN), a UNEP program. The GAN's objective is to help build climate resilience of vulnerable communities, ecosystems and economics through the mobilization of knowledge for adaptations. It aims to create links between already existing Adaptation Network and knowledge initiatives, facilitating access to their services. EPA leads the discussion and adoption of "sustained learning exchanges" as a mechanism to facilitate this exchange.

#### Marine and Water

- EPA plays a significant role in UNEP's Regional Seas Programme and is the US Technical Focal Point for the Land Based Sources Protocol under the Cartagena Convention. EPA works with the programme to address accelerating degradation of the world's ocean and coastal areas, through the sustainable management of use of marine and coastal environments.
- EPA participates in UNEP's Global Partnership on Marine Litter by sharing successes and best practices from EPA's domestic Trash Free Waters program. With the other two Global Programme of Action for the Protection of Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) partnerships on Nutrient Management and Wastewater, EPA has introduced aspects of the U.S. State Revolving Fund in mobilizing investments in wastewater treatment infrastructure for the Caribbean region. We are looking at a historic opportunity to highlight this scientific work and ensure that it helps to inform policy.

#### The 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP)

- EPA serves as the US National Focal Point to for the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the only tangible outcome of the Rio+ 20 conference, for which UNEP is the secretariat. It was welcomed by the U.S. as an opportunity to promote efforts among both public and private sector stakeholders, and to serve as a framework to support a range of stakeholder-driven and stakeholder-led initiatives without the charged atmosphere that often accompanies multilateral engagements. EPA has been engaged in several 10YFP activities including projects on sustainable public procurement and lifecycle assessments.
- EPA drafted a resolution adopted at the 2016 UNEA-2 on the 'prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste' and **YOU** serves a 12.3 Champion, referring to Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 target to 'halve per capital global food waste and reduce food loss.'

#### Research, Data and Technical Partnerships

EPA works with UNEP on a number of technical partnerships:

- To design and implement UNEP Live, a web-based environmental assessment platform, to provide access to national, regional and global assessments and data to improve environmental decision-making.

- Develop new methods to test harmful air pollutants and greenhouse gases from stationary sources. This will help countries around the world get the data they need to establish and enforce rules that reduce air pollution;
- Create a framework for knowledge management that allows for improved interoperability of data, models, decision support tools, assessment mechanisms, and online interfaces. This effort has improved public access to scientific information and is leading to cost and efficiency savings in the development of new decision tools, which in turn will help countries around the world make better and more sustainable environmental choices.
- Researching emissions, health and climate impacts of cooking and heating with biomass or coal stoves, leading the development of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) protocols and standards for laboratory testing of cookstoves, and providing critical support to build stove testing capacity around the world through international Regional Testing and Knowledge Centers (RTKCs) co-sponsored by the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (UNEP is a member).
- Through the GEO AquaWatch Community of Practice (UNEP is a member), EPA is using satellite information to develop an information dissemination system that will allow countries to quickly identify emerging algal blooms and get public health advisories out to the public;

#### Environmental Rule of Law

- EPA has played a significant role in encouraging UNEP to take more concrete action globally to promote improved environmental laws and institutions at the national level, including strengthened environmental law enforcement.
- EPA led negotiations on behalf of the U.S. on the UNEA-2 resolution 2/19 regarding the Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law and earlier on Governing Council Decision 27/9 regarding environmental rule of law, which requested UNEP to work at the national level to strengthen environmental laws, institutions, and enforcement. EPA also serves as the US National Focal Point to for UNEP's Montevideo Programme.
- Through the UNEP budget process and in the UNEA resolution 2/19, EPA and the State Department have encouraged UNEP to strengthen its work addressing air pollution including by providing capacity building assistance on air pollution laws.
- EPA also collaborates with UNEP on a variety of environmental law strengthening initiatives including one to address the problem of lead in paint, as well as working together on the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement and associated regional networks, an environmental code drafting project in Cambodia, and a seaports enforcement program in Africa. EPA also served as an advisor to UNEP on its drafting of a guide book on innovative national efforts regarding access to environmental information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters.

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